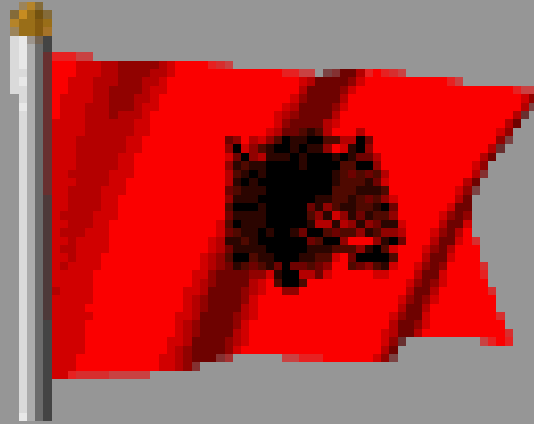


TRAVELER'S BRIEFING



ALBANIA

REPUBLICA E SHQIPERISE



BACKGROUND

Full Name: Republic of Albania

Capital: Tirana

Population: 3,364,571 (est)

Type of government: Emerging Democracy

Head of government: Pres Rexhep Meid

PM Pandeli Majko

Official language(s) Albanian, Greek

Economy: Emerging capitalist

**Religions: Muslim (70%), Albanian Orthodox
Catholic (10%)**

TRAVEL

Travel restrictions: DoS warns against all travel to Albania because the overall security situation in Albania remains

International Airport: Tirana-Rinas

Flights from Frankfurt: Albanian Air

Other methods of arrival: Ship/Road/rail

U.S. Embassy address: Rruga E Elbasanit 103, Tirana

Tel: 355-42-47285/86/87; FAX: 355-42-32222

Transportation: Public transportation: Poor.

Urban Roads/Maintenance: Poor.

Rural roads/Maintenance: Poor.

Availability of roadside assistance: Poor. Major roads are passable, but often in poor repair. Buses travel between most major cities almost exclusively during the day, but may be unreliable and uncomfortable. There are no commercial

ENTRY/EXIT

Travel Necessities: Albania is designated a Special Area by the DoS for senior official travel only (general/flag officers and senior executive service (SES) personnel or equivalent). The requirement for Special Area clearance is waived for personnel assigned to European Command units and those who are one-for-one replacements for personnel currently assigned to existing units or authorized positions in Albania. Units are requested to keep visits to Albania to an absolute minimum. Passport is required, but a visa is not necessary for a tourist stay up to 30 days. An extension up to 180 days may be granted by applying at the local police station. After 180 days, the Ministry of Interior accepts extension requests.. Departing passengers, except official and diplomatic passport holders, pay a \$10 US departure fee.

Customs, immigration, and quarantine inspection is

Amembassy Tirana Communications Center operates 0800-1630L, Mon-Fri.

HELPFUL HINTS

Special restrictions: Travelers must bring a sufficient supply of personal medications. Hotel accommodations are very limited in Albania and sometimes even confirmed reservations are not honored. There are two hotels in Tirana which meet Western standards, but they may be slightly above the per diem rate. The hotels are the Tirana International (335-42-34185) and the Rogner Europapark (355-42-35035). USDAO will coordinate hotel reservations for official travelers. There are no lodging facilities at the airport. Hotel reservation requests should be made as far in advance as possible. Facilities for tourism are not well developed and many of the goods and services taken for granted in other European countries are not yet available. Hotel accommodations are limited outside of Tirana. The Albanian Amembassy Services are limited to emergency assistance only. parents to be an Albanian citizen. This has in the past delayed notification of the Embassy in certain consular cases.

MONEY

Currency restrictions: There is no limit on the import of US or other foreign currency. Import and export currency must be obtained through government authorized sources (banks, hotels, and change offices) at border crossing points. Credit cards and travelers checks are not accepted in Albania, except at the major new hotels in Tirana. Travelers checks can be changed at banks in larger towns.



Rate: Approximate: 141 lek for \$1.

HEALTH

Major threats: diarrhea, respiratory diseases, accidents, arthropod-borne diseases, STDs, cold injuries, industrial pollution and heat injuries (limited)

Availability of medical services: Poor. Medical care in Albania does not meet Western standards. Medical facilities are limited and medicine is in short supply. Immediate cash

Medical Insurance: May not apply in Albania. Check with your policy advisor to see if you are covered or will be reimbursed.

Status of hospitals: Poor.

Health Precautions: Tourists in frail health should not visit Albania. Within recent years there have been outbreaks of

Immunizations: Hep A (recommended), Hep B (recommended), TB (recommended) MMR (recommended) and tetanus-diphtheria boosters (recommended). Yellow fever vaccination required of all travelers over one year of age arriving from an infected area.

FORCE PROTECTION

Country Clearance: Required for all military personnel traveling to Albania not in support of operations in the Balkans. You obtain this by going through your S3/G3 section. This must be done at least 30 days ahead of scheduled visit. DV visits will also be coordinated through S3/G3 channels.

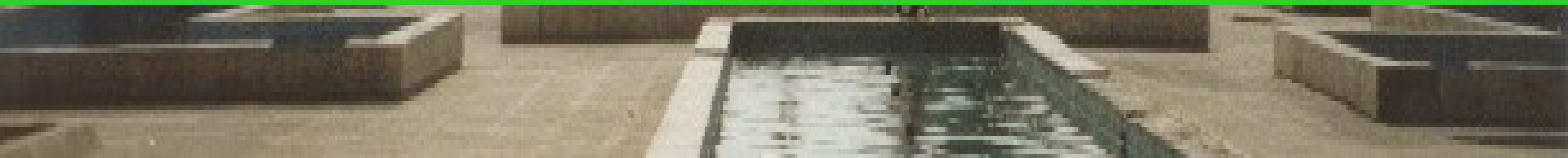
Briefings: AT/FP level I brief from command's Level II trainer

Avoid drinking tap water, especially in rural areas. Use bottled or mineral water whenever possible. Travelers have reported attacks by bands of thieves in all parts of the country at all times of day and night.



CRIME

Criminal Activities: Albania has a high rate of violent crime. Street crime is fairly common and occurs particularly at night. Crime is generally directed at targets of opportunity, not at Americans specifically. Armed carjackings are a matter of considerable concern, especially for drivers of four-wheel drive and sport-utility vehicles, which criminals covet. Persons who are carjacked should surrender their vehicles without resistance. Those resisting carjackings or attempting to run roadblocks have been shot and wounded, some seriously. The loss or theft of a U.S. passport should be reported immediately to the local police and the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Albania is strict on: Drugs. U.S. citizens are subject to the laws of the country in which they are traveling. Penalties for possession, use and dealing of illegal drugs in Albania are severe, and convicted offenders can expect jail sentences and fines.



WEATHER

<http://cnn.com/WEATHER/html>

<Http://www.weatherunderground.com/>



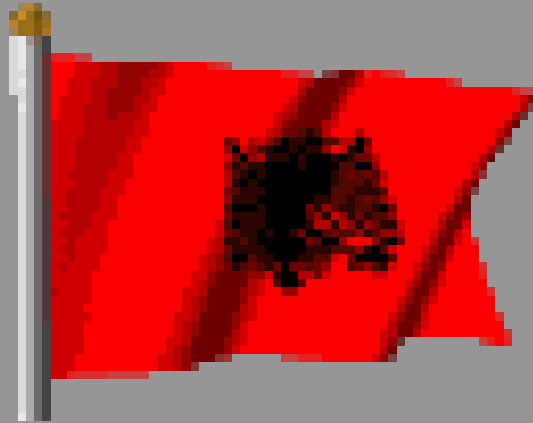
CLOTHING



Uniform restrictions: Civilian clothing is required if arriving by commercial air. Military uniforms are permitted when arriving via military aircraft. Consult with USDAO Tirana to determine if wearing military uniform is authorized or appropriate for a specific visit. Except for summer months, fall/winter clothing is recommended. Umbrellas are recommended, especially Sep-May.



**This concludes the
TRAVELER'S
BRIEFING for**



ALBANIA